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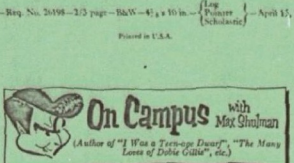

FILLING A WELL-NEEDED GAP

Although my son is a college freshman, I am glad to say that he is still not too old to climb up on my lap and have a heart-to-heart talk when things are troubling him. My boy is enrolled at Harvard where he is studying to be a fireman. From the time he was a little tiny baby he always said he wanted to be a fireman. Of course, my wife and I believed that he would eventually grow out of it, but no sir, the little chap never wavered in his ambition for one minute!

So here he is at Harvard today taking courses in net holding, mouth-to-mouth breathing, carbon tetrachloride, and Dalmatian dogs. It is a full schedule for the young man, and that, in fact, is exactly what we talked about when last he climbed upon my lap.

He complained that every bit of his time is taken up with his major requirements. He doesn't have so much as one hour a week to sample any of the fascinating courses outside his major—history, literature, language, science, or any of the thousand and one things that appeal to his keen young mind.

I am sure that many of you find yourselves in the same scholastic bind: you are taking so many requirements that you can't find time for some appealing electives. Therefore, in today's column I will forego levity and give you a brief survey in a subject that is probably not included in your curriculum.

I have asked the makers of Marlboro Cigarettes whether I might employ this column—normally a vehicle for innocent merriment—to pursue this serious end. "Of course you may, crazy kid," they replied kindlily, their grey eyes crinkling at the corners, their manly mouths twisted in funny little grins. If you are a Marlboro smoker—and what intelligent human person is not?—you would expect the makers of Marlboro to be fine men. And so they are—wonderful guys, every man-jack of them—good, generous, understanding, wise. They are each tipped with a pure white filter and come in soft pack or Flip-Top box.

But I digress. We were going to take up a topic you are probably unable to cover in your busy academic life. Let us start with the most basic topic of all—anthropology, the study of man himself.

Man is usually defined as a tool-making animal, but I personally do not find this definition entirely satisfactory. Man is not the only species which makes tools. The simians, for example, make monkey wrenches.

Still, when you come to a really complicated tool—like a linotype, for instance—you can be fairly sure it was made by Homo sapiens—or else a very intelligent tiger. The question one should ask, therefore, is not who made the tool, but *what* did he do with it.

For example, in a recent excavation in the Olduvai Gorge a large assortment of hominid fossils was found, all dating back

to the Middle Pleistocene Age. Buried with the fossils was a number of their artifacts, the most interesting being a black metal box which emitted a steady beeping sound. Now, of course, zoologists will tell you that tree frogs make such boxes which they employ in their mating activities (I can't go into detail about it in this family newspaper) but the eminent anthropological team, Mr. and Mrs. Walther Sigafoos (both he and she are named Walther) were convinced that this particular box was made not by tree frogs but by Neanderthal men. To prove their point, they switched on the box and out came television, which, as everyone knows, was the forerunner of fire.

If there is anything more you need to know about anthropology, just climb up on my lap as soon as my son leaves.

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The makers of Marlboro Cigarettes who sponsor this column, often with trepidation, are not anthropologists. They are tobacconists—good ones, I think—and I think you'll think so too when you sample their wares—available wherever cigarettes are sold in all fifty states.

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